

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

AUGUST 2003



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Highest July rate in metro area in ten years

Following months of only modest increases in unemployment in the Eau Claire metro area the unemployment rate in July jumped four tenths of a percentage point from 5.2 percent in June to the current rate of 5.6 percent. Six of the state's eleven metro areas reported similar increases in unemployment rate and only two reported a decline. The State of Wisconsin seasonally adjusted rate in July was unchanged at 5.6 percent while the national rate declined from 6.4 percent in June to 6.2 percent in July.

The unemployment rate this July is the highest for the month since July 1993 when the area was still recovering from the last recession - a recession that officially ended March 1991. Unemployment continues high long after a recession ends because many employers do not immediately rehire workers as the economy begins to improve. Before adding new workers they first increase work hours for existing employees.

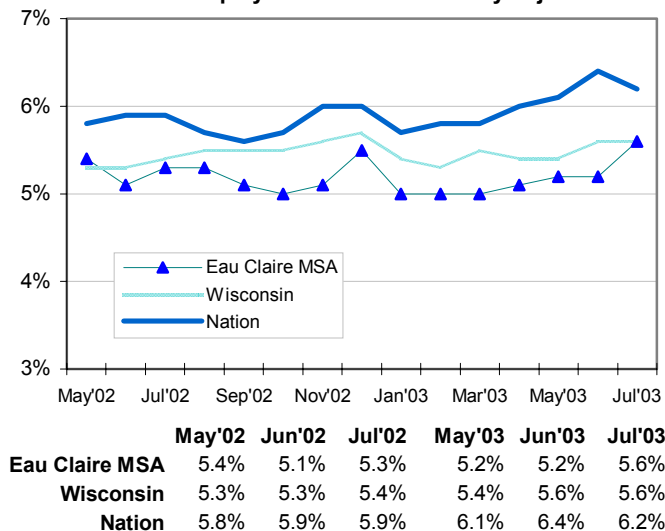
In the Eau Claire area the average number of hours in the workweek for manufacturing workers increased from 42.8 hours one year ago to 44.4 hours this July. Statewide the average number of hours for manufacturing workers was only 39.5 and was down slightly from one year ago.

The number of manufacturing jobs in the Eau Claire metro area once again declined after some encouraging gains last month. The current level of manufacturing employment dropped to 10,700 roughly 800 less than one year ago but still higher than the 9,900 manufacturing jobs in July 1993.

There were 73,000 nonfarm jobs in the metro area in July, the same as in June. Although the total remained the same there were some industries where employers added workers. The largest increase, 300 jobs, occurred in health care. Retail trade employers added 200 jobs in July, as did leisure and hospitality employers. These gains were cancelled by the losses in transportation and warehousing, manufacturing, and government.

That some employers were hiring in July may have encouraged job seekers to remain in the labor market even though they did not find jobs. The number of unemployed in the metro area did drop by 300 during the month but that reduction was less than is typical. As a result there were more unemployed in Eau Claire and Chippewa counties this year than twelve months earlier. The number of unemployed increased even though the number of resi-

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



## July Civilian Labor Force Estimates, not seasonally adjusted, for West Central Wisconsin counties

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Civilian labor force	25,762	25,757	24,808	32,143	32,004	31,484	16,321	16,472	15,760	22,537	23,372	21,790	55,685	55,271	54,490
Employed	24,437	24,287	23,595	30,418	30,109	29,868	15,371	15,393	14,915	21,501	22,267	20,933	53,064	52,525	52,105
Unemployed	1,325	1,470	1,213	1,725	1,895	1,616	950	1,079	845	1,036	1,105	857	2,621	2,746	2,385
% unemployed	5.1	5.7	4.9	5.4	5.9	5.1	5.8	6.6	5.4	4.6	4.7	3.9	4.7	5.0	4.4
	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Civilian labor force	3,607	3,661	3,328	21,693	21,784	21,484	24,405	25,456	23,657	38,310	38,597	37,868	240,463	242,374	234,669
Employed	3,431	3,477	3,136	20,658	20,627	20,412	22,361	23,135	22,273	35,810	35,756	35,384	227,051	227,576	222,621
Unemployed	176	184	192	1,035	1,157	1,072	2,044	2,321	1,384	2,500	2,841	2,484	13,412	14,798	12,048
% unemployed	4.9	5.0	5.8	4.8	5.3	5.0	8.4	9.1	5.9	6.5	7.4	6.6	5.6	6.1	5.1

\* not seasonally adjusted

### Industry Employment Estimate for West Central Wisconsin: Current month - July 2003

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Total Nonfarm	22.3	22.5	21.9	10.1	10.3	9.8	15.1	15.9	14.9	2.5	2.5	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	6.7	6.4	6.7	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.1	2.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Trade	3.6	3.6	3.6	1.5	1.6	1.5	2.6	2.6	2.3	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.7	1.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.4	1.3	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.2	4.9	4.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	3.2	4.2	3.5	0.5	0.6	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Total Nonfarm	9.8	10.3	10.1	14.7	15.5	15.0	27.8	28.3	27.4	76.8	76.8	76.7
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.9	1.8	1.7	3.2	3.1	3.6
Manufacturing	0.8	0.8	0.9	3.6	3.7	3.9	5.8	5.7	6.3	10.7	10.8	11.5
Trade	1.1	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	12.8	12.6	12.8
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.9	1.0	0.9	2.7	2.9	2.7
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.9	3.8	3.8	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.8	2.9	2.7	12.4	12.3	12.1
Leisure & Hospitality	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	3.9	3.8	3.5	8.0	7.8	7.8
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.5	3.8	3.8	3.8	8.1	8.0	8.0
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.8	3.8	3.7
Total Government	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.2	2.9	2.3	3.2	3.8	3.2	11.3	11.7	10.8

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2002 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

Employers with multiple sites can improve the information on local labor force and employment conditions (used in the above table) in their counties by providing employment and wages for each of their Wisconsin locations on the Multiple Worksite Report (MWR). The voluntary report correctly identifies the employment and wages of *where people work* instead of the data being aggregated in one industry or one location. For example, XYZ Company has physical locations in three counties but completes its tax accounting report in only one county. That means all employees and their wages are allocated to that single county inflating the actual employment picture there and deflating the picture in the other two counties. The MWR distributes that employment to all three counties and helps to improve local indicators used by planners, businesses, developers, and analysts.

Contact Deborah Holt, program manager, at 608-266-5321 for more information.

dents filing claims for unemployment compensation benefits is down. Loosely interpreted that could mean that there is some optimism among local job seekers that their job search efforts could pay off. Nationally, discouraged job seekers dropped out of the labor market.

Unemployment rates declined in July in 62 counties in the state including all of the counties in the West Central region. Several local counties, Pepin, Pierce, and St. Croix, were among the 21 in the state where unemployment rates were also down from one year ago. In Pepin County the current unemployment rate of 4.9 percent is lower than the 5.0 percent rate in June and the 5.8 percent rate of one year ago. In Pierce, the July rate was 4.8 percent, down from 5.3

percent in June and 5.0 percent one year ago. And, in St. Croix County, the current rate of 6.5 percent is down from 7.4 percent in June and from 6.6 percent one year ago.

The unemployment rate for the combined West Central region was 5.6 percent in July higher than it was one year ago. The number of nonfarm jobs in the region declined by more than 3,000 in July with government agencies bearing most of the reductions. Most of the loss is still associated with school recess and the problems associated with delayed payroll reports. There are also fewer government jobs compared with last year and this could be the first indicator that state and local units are reducing staff or not hiring as many summer workers as in past years.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

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